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UNCLAS BEIJING 15339

FOLLOWING MESSAGE TRANSMITS CHENGDU 0603 QUOTE

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PG0V, PHUK, CH

SUBJ: ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF STUDENT PROTESTER FAILS TO
AROUSE NEW DEMONSTRATIONS IN CHENGDU

1. SUMMARY. CHENGDU STUDENTS REMAIN QUIET DESPITE THE DEATH OF A STUDENT PROTESTER. THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT ISSUED A NEW NOTICE ABOUT RESTORING ORDER AND PROHIBITING GOVERNMENT WORKERS FROM ANY ASSOCIATION WITH PROTESTS BUT CALLING FOR GREATER DIALOGUE. TIBET AND YUNNAN NEWSPAPERS REPORT EARLIER PROTESTS IN LHASA AND KUNMING. END SUMMARY.

2. THE DEATH IN A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT OF A STUDENT PROTESTER AND INJURIES OF FIVE OTHER STUDENTS ON JUNE 1 FAILED TO CREATE THE SORT OF PROTEST BACKLASH SOME STUDENTS HAD HOPED FOR AND TRAFFIC POLICE ANTICIPATED. THE STUDENTS, ALL FROM THE SICHUAN COLLEGE OF INDUSTRY IN SUBURBAN CHENGDU, HAD BEEN PROTESTING ON A MAJOR HIGHWAY IN FRONT OF THEIR CAMPUS. A TRUCK, WHICH ACCORDING TO LOCAL NEWS ACCOUNT HAD FAULTY BRAKES, SAW THE GROUP TOO LATE TO STOP, AND CAUSED THE CASUALTIES.

3. STUDENTS FROM THE COLLEGE BEGAN THE SAME DAY TO PUT UP POSTERS IN DOWNTOWN CHENGDU ABOUT THE DEATH AND INJURIES, AND ORGANIZED A MOURNING VIGIL AT THE BASE OF CHENGDU'S CENTRAL MAO STATUE, WHERE A HANDFUL OF PROTESTERS AND HUNGER STRIKERS FROM SEVERAL SCHOOLS REMAIN. THEY BROADCAST APPEALS FOR STUDENTS TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE FOR WHICH THE STUDENT DIED. STUDENTS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS HAVE FAILED TO EMBRACE THE CALL TO MAKE HIM A MARTYR TO THE DEMOCRACY CAUSE, HOWEVER. TRAFFIC POLICE APPARENTLY ANTICIPATED LARGE PROTESTS, SINCE THEY CLOSED OFF THE AREA NEAR THE MAO STATUE FOR OVER AN HOUR MID-DAY ON JUNE 1.

4. THE COLLEGE OF INDUSTRY HAD PROVIDED ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST VOCAL GROUPS OF PROTESTERS DURING THE LARGE-SCALE DEMONSTRATIONS OF THE WEEK OF MAY 15, BUT STUDENTS HAD RETURNED TO CAMPUS OVER A WEEK AGO. ACCORDING TO FOREIGN EXPERTS, THEY CONTINUED TO ORGANIZE ON-CAMPUS PROTESTS EVERY NIGHT AFTER THE MANDATORY LIGHTS OUT AT 11 P.M. MOST OTHER LOCAL CAMPUSES HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET.

5. THE SICHUAN GOVERNMENT ISSUED A STERN WARNING DATED MAY 27 ABOUT RESTORING PUBLIC ORDER, PROHIBITING ANY GOVERNMENT WORKER FROM TAKING ANY PART IN PARADES OR OTHER PROTEST ACTIVITIES OR SPREADING RUMORS AND UNCONDITIONALLY RESUMING

CLASSES. THE NOTICE ALSO POINTS OUT THAT MOST OF THE STUDENT PROTESTERS WERE INDEED PROTESTERS AND EMPHASIZES THE NEED RIGOROUSLY TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN SUCH STUDENTS AND A VERY SMALL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO CREATED CHAOS (ZHIZAO BONGLUAN). THE NOTICE ALSO CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT AND SCHOOLS TO START MULTI-LEVEL, MULTI-STYLE, MULTI-CHANNEL DIALOGUES WITH STUDENTS.

3. CONSULATE JUST RECEIVED YUNNAN AND TIBET NEWSPAPERS FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 15, WHICH REPORT RELATIVELY LARGE PROTESTS IN KUNMING AND LHASA, EVEN DESPITE THE CONTINUATION OF MARTIAL LAW IN LHASA. THE REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE PROTESTS WERE PEACEFUL AND DID NOT INVOLVE ANY VIOLENCE OR ARRESTS.
DE VILDE END QUOTE
LILLEY

United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
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